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TAGS: [PREL](#) [KUNR](#) [PHUM](#) [UNAU](#) [ADCO](#) [EI](#)
SUBJECT: IRELAND MOSTLY AGREES WITH USG ON UN HUMAN RIGHTS
COUNCIL, MANDATE REVIEW

REF: A. STATE 4746

[1](#)B. STATE 4745

Classified By: Political-Economic Counselor Mary E. Daly; Reasons 1.4 (B) and (D).

[1](#)1. (C) Summary: Ireland agrees with ref A demarche points on ensuring the prospective UN Human Rights Council's recourse to country-specific resolutions and on completing the UN management/mandate review, according to John Deady and Brian Cahalane, Department of Foreign Affairs (DFA) Director and Deputy Director, respectively, for UN Affairs. The Irish Government believes, however, that the U.S. proposal to keep HRC membership to the 22-30 range is unrealistically low, as it would leave relatively fewer seats to European countries and preclude a more participatory approach to the promotion of human rights. Ireland is also uneasy about U.S. support for the P-5 Convention in regard to the Human Rights Council, but recognizes the role that membership issues will play in forging support for the Council in the U.S. Congress. Deady committed to pass ref A points to the DFA's senior leadership. End Summary.

The Human Rights Council

[1](#)2. (C) In a January 20 discussion with Emboffs, Deady noted that the GOI and the USG shared similar views on the Human Rights Council (HRC) and country-specific resolutions. For Ireland and EU Member States, he said, possible proposals to eliminate HRC country-specific resolutions or to require a two-thirds majority for their passage were non-starters. Deady conveyed concern, however, that the proliferation of country-specific proposals by the Commission for Human Rights (CHR) in recent years had diminished their value and intensified widespread dissatisfaction with the CHR. "If every country is condemned, no one pays attention," he observed. Deady related the GOI's hope that the HRC would focus on the most egregious human rights situations in order to give country-specific resolutions greater clout.

[1](#)3. (C) The U.S. proposal to keep HRC membership to the 22-30 range was unrealistically low, said Deady. If membership were apportioned by region, he observed, the U.S. proposal would leave relatively fewer seats available for European countries. A small HRC, moreover, would be seen as an "us-against-them" club in dealing with human rights violators. Deady argued that a more participatory approach to HRC membership would make the body's actions on human rights more effective and credible; Ireland and EU Member States thus believed that the HRC should have roughly the same number of members as the CHR. Ireland, he noted, agreed with the U.S. view that HRC members should be individually elected by a two-thirds majority of the General Assembly, as

with non-permanent members of the UNSC. He added that geographic distribution should be an important, though not absolute, determinant of membership.

14. (C) Further on HRC membership, Deady remarked that U.S. support for the P-5 Convention (per ref B, the custom of the Security Council's permanent members being elected to a UN body on which they want to be members, in return for agreement not to chair the body) would create difficulties. He explained that Ireland and other EU Member States had shared the impression that the USG was content with a rotational approach giving the United States a more-than-equal role when serving as a member, but not the right to be a member at all times. Deady recounted that it had actually been Sweden, not Sudan, that had replaced the United States on the CHR in 2001, a switch that had not had a practical impact on the CRH's work, he believed. He conceded, however, that Ireland was sensitive to the need to build strong support for the new HRC within the U.S. Congress, which was likely to focus heavily on the membership issue.

Management/Mandate Reform

15. (C) Ireland and the United States were also like-minded on the importance of UN management reform and mandate review, said Deady. He remarked that Ireland and EU Member States strongly supported the Secretary General's authority to re-deploy resources and staff from ineffectual to proven UN programs. Deady added that the UN's effectiveness, not simple cost-cutting, should be the touchstone of this exercise. Cahalane noted that the GOI expected the UNSYG to submit a management report in late February and to complete the mandate review by March/April. Cahalane also cautioned that many mandates were of the pro-forma/dead-letter variety

and that their elimination might not have a major impact on UN expenses.

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